

News

Children do better in traditional families than in same-sex families, study says

Author: Admin

Date: 12th June 2012

Adults who were raised by same-sex parents are more likely to have been on social welfare, more likely to be unemployed and more likely to have received psychotherapy than those from intact biological families, according to new US research.



The groundbreaking study, "[How Different are the Adult Children of Parents Who Have Same-Sex Relationships? Findings from the New Family Structures Study](#)" examined 175 children with mothers who had had a gay relationship and 73 with fathers who had had a gay relationship out of a sample of 3,000 adults now aged 18 to 39.

Unlike previous studies of children of same-sex parents, the study used a random sample of children.

Previously, research on the subject had used "snowball" sampling, in which gay parents are recruited in the same places as their gay friends and colleagues.

The population-based survey, published in July's Social Science Research is the largest of its kind, the University of Texas said, to feature children with gay parents in such a broad, probability-sampled population.

Lead author Mark Regnerus, a sociology professor at the University of Texas at Austin, said: "The empirical claim that no notable differences exist must go."

However, he cautioned that his study does not attempt to "undermine or affirm arguments" about gay rights or link poor adult outcomes solely to gay parenting.

But it should raise the bar for research on gay parenting, according to Dr Patrick Fagan, a family and marriage scholar at the Family Research Council.

The Regnerus study is a "gold standard," Mr. Fagan said. And if "you can't draw conclusions from it" about causality, "there's not a snowball's chance in hell you can draw conclusions from those other [gay parenting] studies," he said.

When compared with adults raised in married, mother-father families, adults raised by lesbian mothers had negative outcomes in 24 of 40 categories, while adults raised by gay fathers had negative outcomes in 19 categories, according to the study.

The study found that 69pc of children of mothers who had had gay relationships said their family received public assistance at some point, compared with 17pc from married, biological parents.

It also found that just under 50pc of children of intact biological families said they were employed full time at the time of the survey, compared with 26pc of children of lesbian mothers.

According to the the study, children whose parents had been in same-sex relationships were more than twice as likely to be in therapy (19pc compared to eight percent).

Forty percent of those whose mother was in a same-sex relationship reported having an affair while married or cohabiting, and 25pc of those with a father in a same-sex relationship also reported having had an affair. By comparison, 13pc of those from an intact biological family reported having an affair.

Children raised by same-sex parents were also more likely to have been sexually assaulted than those raised in an intact, biological family. Twenty three percent of children raised by a lesbian mother reported being sexually assaulted by an adult, compared to two percent of children raised by their biological parents. The figure for those raised by same-sex fathers was six percent.

Thirty one percent of children raised by lesbian mothers and 25pc of children raised by gay fathers reported

 Subscribe to our eLetter.	 Make a donation to the IONA INSTITUTE
 Download Iona Institute Documents	 Spotlight
Recently Published Articles	

[UK Catholic schools oversubscribed](#)

[Irish egg and sperm donor law unenforceable says Alan Shatter](#)

[Mother gives birth to her single son's child via IVF](#)

[Maternal health better in areas of restricted abortion – study](#)

[Activists demand Archbishop Carey's portrait be removed over marriage stance](#)

[More News Articles](#)

[Fergus Finlay, Falling Skies, and Three Simple Questions on the Family Bill](#)

[How different polling questions on same-sex marriage get different results](#)

[The Government's disastrous attitude towards marriage](#)

[Justice Minister happy to see fathers cut out of the lives of children](#)

[Explaining to Fintan O'Toole the reasoning behind Article 41](#)

[More Iona Blog Articles](#)

[The teaching of the Church on marriage today](#)
March 19 2015

[Church of Mercy, Church of Standards](#)
October 23, 2014

[The Meaning of Religious Freedom](#)
June 17, 2014

[Aggressive Secularism: lessons for Ireland from Scotland](#)
May 15, 2014

[Church and State under Enda Kenny](#)
October 24

[More Iona Events](#)

having sex against their will, compared to eight percent of those raised in intact biological families.

Twenty per cent of those raised by lesbian mothers, and 25pc of those raised by gay fathers reported having had a sexually transmitted disease, compared to eight per cent of those raised by their natural mother and father.

Findings such as these do not support claims that there are "no differences" between gay parenting and heterosexual, married parents, said Mr. Regnerus, who helped develop the New Family Structures Study at the university.

A second study, also in Social Science Research, takes a critical look at the basis of an oft-cited American Psychological Association (APA) report on gay parenting.

The APA brief says, "Not a single study has found children of lesbian or gay parents to be disadvantaged in any significant respect relative to children of heterosexual parents," according to Loren Marks, associate professor at the School of Human Ecology at Louisiana State University.

However, after looking at the 59 studies that undergird this assertion, "the jury is still out," Mr. Marks said. "The lack of high-quality data leaves the most significant questions [about gay parenting] unaddressed and unanswered."

The study cited multiple problems with the APA-cited studies such as their tiny size; dependence on wealthy, white, well-educated lesbian mothers; and a failure to examine common outcomes for children, such as their education, employment and risks for poverty, criminality, early childbearing, substance abuse and suicide.

**More News**
Click here for a full list

FOLLOW IONA ON **twitter**

More...

PrintEmail

Articles by Category	Relevant Links	Recent Iona Documents
Marriage & the Family	The Institute for Marriage and Public Policy	Restoring Balance and Fairness in Family Taxation
Schools & Education	Relationships Foundation	Submission to the Equality Authority on s37 of the Employment Equality Acts
Religion & Religious Practice	First Things	Marriage Breakdown and Family Structure in Ireland
Freedom of Conscience & Religion	National Fatherhood Initiative	Pre Budget submission on Tax Individualisation by the Iona Institute
Other	Studies	More Iona Documents
	The Institute for the Study of Civil Society	
	More Links	